

many provisions in the bill. Mandatory reliability standards are a perfect example of what we all agree should be part of our national energy policy.

Our citizens deserve a reliable, safe power grid. This is one of the country's most pressing energy needs. We have to do all that we can to prevent blackouts like the one that hit the east coast and Midwest last August and the Electric Reliability Act of 2004 takes a crucial step toward that goal. The bill grants the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission—FERC—the explicit authority to create mandatory electric reliability standards. FERC can also approve the formation of electric reliability organizations, which will, subject to FERC review, enforce these standards. Strong and enforceable electric reliability standards will help ensure that our citizens and businesses do not have to worry about their respective lives and livelihoods being disrupted by blackouts.

In fact, a joint investigation by a United States-Canadian task force found that the lack of mandatory reliability standards contributed to the August 14, 2003, blackout. This massive outage affected 50 million people in eight U.S. States and parts of Canada. The task force report found that an Ohio-based utility and regional grid manager together violated at least six reliability standards on the day of the blackout. Examples of the reliability violations that contributed to the blackout included: not reacting to a power line failure within 30 minutes, not notifying nearby systems of the transmission problems, failing to analyze what was happening to the grid, inadequately training operators, and failing to adequately monitor transmission stations. Since the industry is largely self-regulated, violations of these voluntary reliability standards carry no penalties. This legislation would hold utilities accountable for reliability violations.

Let's act now and pass this legislation before we face a blackout like we saw last summer. We should work together to pass the elements of the broader energy bill that are necessary and widely supported. I urge my colleagues to support Senator CANTWELL's bill and to join me in asking that this legislation come to the floor.

OFFICER STEPHAN GRAY

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate the life and mourn the death of Officer Stephan Gray of the Merced Police Department. On April 15, 2004, Stephan Gray, age 34, became the first officer to be killed in the line of duty in the history of the Merced Police Department. Stephan is mourned by his wife Michelle Gray and their three children: Landess, 13; Isaiah, 5; and Cameron, 3.

Officer Stephan Gray died in the line of duty while protecting the community that he cherished. Officer Gray worked for the Merced Police Depart-

ment for seven years, where he was assigned to the Gang Violence Suppression Unit and the Special Operations Unit. Officer Gray was well known for going above and beyond the call of duty, distinguishing himself as a dedicated and brave officer through his many heroic efforts and accomplishments. During his tenure with Merced Police Department, Officer Gray received a commendation for assisting in the capture of a dangerous criminal street gang member and for saving the life of an eleven-month-old infant who was not breathing. Officer Gray devoted himself to making the streets safer for the people of Merced.

Stephan Gray was also a loving husband, father, and son. He enjoyed playing catch with his son, Isaiah. He loved to sing and dance and was an avid scuba diver and tropical fish enthusiast.

My heart goes out to his wife, his daughter, his sons, and the countless others whose lives he touched. I want them to know that people across California share their grief as we also salute the gift of his life and work.

A gallant officer is gone, but he will not be forgotten. We can and must carry on his work by giving community police officers and other first responders the resources they need to bring peace and safety to our Nation's streets and neighborhoods.

IN CELEBRATION OF ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and to pay tribute to the struggles and enormous contributions of Asian Pacific Americans to our Nation's history and culture.

Each May since 1978, we have honored the rich heritage and countless achievements of the many Asian Pacific Americans in our country. The month of May was aptly chosen in order to commemorate both the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants in 1843, and also the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869, which was constructed in large part by Chinese laborers.

"Freedom for All, a Nation We Call Our Own" is the theme for this year's celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. This phrase beautifully encapsulates the great journey of Asian Pacific Americans to achieve the American dream and rings especially true during these uncertain times at home and abroad.

The men and women of our Armed Forces, many of whom are from the APA community, are proudly serving all over the world to secure our homeland. Currently, thousands of young Asian Pacific Americans are defending our country, joining the ranks of over 300,000 APA veterans who have served in the name of freedom.

One such veteran is my esteemed colleague, Senator INOUE of Hawaii, who

began his career in public service during World War II where he served in the Army's 442d Regimental Combat Team. The famed "Go for Broke" regiment of Japanese American soldiers courageously defended our country abroad even as their families endured unjust internment at home.

This is just one of the many achievements made by Asian Pacific Americans in the face of adversity. Despite discriminatory laws such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Alien Law Act of 1920, and the forced internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, Asian Pacific Americans have forged ahead to become a very successful and fast-growing segment of American society.

Today, over 13 million Asian Pacific Americans reside in the United States. Whether through academics, technology, the arts, or business, the impact of the APA community is felt in virtually every aspect of our society.

The U.S. Department of Commerce estimates that Asian Pacific American firms alone account for 2.2 million American jobs and generate over \$300 billion in revenue. In California alone, Asian Pacific Americans own over 12 percent of all businesses, making them a significant force in the State's economy.

Asian Pacific Americans are also gaining an increased presence in Federal, State, and local governments. Throughout my career, I have had the distinct honor of working with many extraordinary Asian Pacific American leaders such as Senators Inouye and Akaka of Hawaii, Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta, and Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao. Each of these public servants can function as an inspiration to all Americans.

But even as we celebrate these achievements, we must continue to address the struggles and hardships experienced by certain segments of the APA community.

In California, we have large populations of Southeast Asian and Pacific Islanders who have recently sought refuge in our country as a result of war and civil unrest. As these newcomers to America pursue their dreams and goals, we need to remember the challenges they face and stay vigilant against discrimination and hate.

That is why I believe one of the most significant contributions of Asian Pacific Americans to our Nation is their role as our neighbors. America draws its strength from diversity. The presence of Asian Pacific Americans in our communities further adds to the vibrancy of the American landscape.

The strength of diversity is evident in my home State of California, where close to one-third of the entire Asian Pacific American population lives. One only needs to look at Los Angeles and San Francisco to see the rich kaleidoscope of cultures and traditions that Asian Pacific Americans have brought to their communities.

Places such as Chinatown, Little Tokyo, Little Saigon and Koreatown